

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims replace all prior versions, and listings, of the claims in this application:

1-16. (Cancelled)

17. (Currently Amended) A method for the inhibition of melanin synthesis in skin and/or hair comprising: (a) providing a composition comprising a sugar ester; and (b) contacting a substrate selected from the group consisting of skin and hair with the composition in an amount effective to inhibit the synthesis of melanin, whereby the ability of the skin or hair to synthesize melanin is inhibited.

18. (Original) The method according to claim 17, wherein the sugar ester comprises a fatty acid ester of a sugar selected from the group consisting of monosaccharides, disaccharides and mixtures thereof.

19. (Original) The method according to claim 17, wherein the sugar ester comprises a fatty acid ester of a sugar selected from the group consisting of fructose, glucose, trehalose, sucrose and mixtures thereof.

20. (Original) The method according to claim 17, wherein the sugar ester comprises a fatty acid ester of fructose.

21. (Original) The method according to claim 17, wherein the sugar ester comprises a fatty acid ester of a sugar, the fatty acid moiety corresponding to the general formula R^1CO- , wherein R^1CO is a linear or branched, saturated or unsaturated acyl or hydroxyacyl group having from 6 to 22 carbon atoms and having up to 3 carbon-carbon double bonds.

22. (Original) The method according to claim 21, wherein R^1CO is a linear or branched, saturated or unsaturated acyl or hydroxyacyl group having from 8 to 16 carbon atoms and having up to 3 carbon-carbon double bonds.
23. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 17, wherein the sugar ester comprises a fatty acid ester of a sugar, the fatty acid moiety comprising a dicarboxylic acid having from 2 to 22 carbon atoms.
24. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 17, wherein the sugar ester comprises a fatty acid ester of a sugar, the fatty acid moiety comprising a dicarboxylic acid having from 6 to 18 carbon atoms.
25. (Original) The method according to claim 17, wherein the sugar ester comprises a plurality of sugar esters having an average degree of esterification of from 1 to 6.
26. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 17, wherein the sugar ester comprises a plurality of sugar esters having an average degree of esterification of from 1.5 ~~1.5~~ to 2.5.
27. (Original) The method according to claim 17, wherein the sugar ester is present in an amount of from 0.0001 to 10% by weight, based on the composition.
28. (Original) The method according to claim 17, wherein the sugar ester is present in an amount of from 0.001 to 5% by weight, based on the composition.
29. (Original) The method according to claim 17, wherein the sugar ester is present in an amount of from 0.01 to 1% by weight, based on the composition.
30. (Currently Amended) A method for the inhibition of melanin synthesis in skin and/or hair comprising: (a) providing a composition comprising a plurality of sugar esters having an average degree of esterification of from 1.5 ~~1.5~~ to 2.5, at least one of the sugar

esters comprising a fatty acid ester of a sugar selected from the group consisting of fructose, glucose, trehalose, sucrose and mixtures thereof, the fatty acid moiety corresponding to the general formula R^1CO- , wherein R^1CO is a linear or branched, saturated or unsaturated acyl or hydroxyacyl group having from 6 to 22 carbon atoms and having up to 3 carbon-carbon double bonds, and wherein the plurality of sugar esters is present in an amount of from 0.0001 to 10% by weight, based on the composition; and (b) contacting a substrate selected from the group consisting of skin and hair with the composition in an amount effective to inhibit the synthesis of melanin, whereby the ability of the skin or hair to synthesize melanin is inhibited.